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THEOSOPHY

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, AND THE BROTHERHOOD OF HUMANITY

THE STUDY OF OCCULT SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY, AND ARYAN LITERATURE

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ALTHOUGH *all that we can say is but a re-statement, there is a different light cast sometimes by a word or an application, which will be helpful and useful to some. If we stand true and steadfast as to our aim, purpose and teaching, we will afford such aid and guidance as is in our power to all who may inquire, and all necessary arrangements will shape themselves. Those who are true to this principle will always remain in union, even on an agreement to differ. It should never at any time, nor should any of our policies and practices, degenerate into hard and fast conclusions as to men, things, or methods of work.* —ROBERT CROSBIE

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A U M

One word to you, as a friend and brother: make clean and clear, first, the mental conceptions and perceptions; the rest *will follow naturally.* —ROBERT CROSBIE

THEOSOPHY

Vol. XL **February, 1952** **No. 4**

TIDES OF MIND

IT is more than seventy-six years since the founding of the Theosophical Society in New York City, and nearly sixty years since the last Theosophical text of importance—*The Ocean of Theosophy*—was published. For something over thirty-nine of these years, this Magazine, begun in 1912, has been chronicling the gradual penetration of our race-mind and culture by Theosophical ideas. In terms of the hundred-year cycle of the Theosophical Movement, the present marks the beginning of the last quarter of the period, a time in which the fruition of efforts in the past should begin to be manifest.

There is hardly need to point out the difficulty in recognizing evidence of "progress," Theosophically speaking. Whatever may be said of a comparison of the early days of the Movement with the present, one thing is clear: the times are different, so much so that the very guideposts against which one might attempt to measure the progress gained seem hidden from view. For this reason, much encouragement may be found in the undiminished contemporaneity of essential content in the major works of Madame Blavatsky, which have lost none of their dynamic appeal to the human mind, none of the intellectual sparkle and profound moral leverage, due to the passage of years. Rather, these works seem to acquire a new vitality with each generation of students, as though the ideas they contain are literally supplemented, or expanded, as a result of the intensive reflection and applications made by so many inquiring minds.

Here, perhaps, in the direct susceptibility of the minds of our time to Theosophical influence is the best possible and only criterion of

Theosophical progress. For this, after all, has been the direction of the labors of everyone truly engaged in the Theosophical Movement; this has been the ideal, the hope, and the inspiration, resting upon the proposition that *knowledge*—actual comprehension of the human being, his nature and his possibilities—is of greater importance to mankind than any other enterprise or objective. There have always been workers for world peace in plenty, economic reformers, and champions of the oppressed and the persecuted, even if in small minority groups. There have been foundations and societies for the support of every laudable cause of a practical nature that can be imagined; also good and kindly men in all countries—people who, despite endless bewilderments, are genuinely devoted to their fellows and to the common good. But of the ideal of Knowledge, in its broad and unspecialized sense, we have for a long time heard very little mention. Yet "knowledge" is now spoken of more with each passing year.

Though we stand at the threshold of an era in which this need will be admitted, the great body of human beings moves slowly in the search for synthesis, as slowly as the "mills of the Gods." It seems likely that the world may exist in a state of almost complete uncertainty for a number of years, until the inner insecurities which result from loss of faith declare themselves in the breakdown of external institutions. Most men fear disillusionment as much or more than any other kind of experience, and tend to cling to last remaining hopes inherited from the past. Only the rarest of humans seem able to break out of the hypnotic control of the accepted institutions of their time. It required the incalculable karmic stamina of a Siddartha to *insist* upon questioning the status quo of his social situation, regardless of his own "well-adjusted" and carefree life. Other men questioned pain and death only when it came to them, but Gautama sought the cause of sorrow as he witnessed it in others.

In the present, disaster and disillusionment are assuming total proportions, and in consequence we may look for a new cycle of human questioning on a total scale. This, perhaps, may be regarded as the environmental aspect of the world's condition. Psychically and intellectually, other factors of preparation have been at work. In the field of religion, orthodoxies which were ensconced in high popular authority in the days of H. P. Blavatsky's lifetime have preserved but

the shell of their former psychological influence. Only the Roman church remains as an actual power in relation to the numerous individuals who have accepted its profession of faith. The Protestant sects, except for the "Fundamentalist" groups, have grown so "liberal" that they have little more than verbal formulas to distinguish them from the secular humanists. The moral vitality of liberal Christians has been drawn off into movements working for pacifism, racial equality, and social justice. While these changes were taking place, the more perceptive of Christian thinkers have come under the influence of Eastern currents of thought, with the result that the themes of Vedanta are mingled with the mystical aspect of the Christian tradition. Quite evidently, a cycle of modern Quietism has begun, under the guidance and instruction of both Eastern and Western representatives of this form of religious psychism. The increasing prominence of erratic Fundamentalism, on the other hand, in contrast with the powerful conservative orthodoxies of a generation ago, is further indication of the ferment in religion, and the weakening of the support of the established sects. While statistics may reveal a growth in numbers for these denominations, church membership is much more of a merely institutional association than in former years, personal faith in a particular theology having become a matter of small importance.

A major barrier against which H.P.B. contended was the cold wall of skepticism maintained by scientists to exclude psychic research from serious examination. This wall is all but razed to the ground. From being a pursuit of dubious respectability, almost an "off-color" interest, work in the field of psychic phenomena is now often regarded as a sort of "advance guard" activity. Some of the most influential books of the century have made extensive philosophic capital of the findings of psychical investigators. The facts and figures undergoing continual publication at Duke University have practically converted the educated world to the view that psychic powers constitute a natural reality—a reality which now may be referred to by serious writers without apology or extensive explanation. Even if no more research were done in this direction—which is unlikely—the momentum of the interest generated by such investigators would doubtless carry forward to a time when acceptance of the psychical would be taken for granted.

The neat world of physical machinery created by nineteenth-century physics has suffered three major shocks—more than enough to displace it from its dogmatic foundations. The first shock was the discovery of the electron in the 1890's, leading to the dissolution of matter into energy, in physical theory. The second was the Einstein Theory, which tore the visible world loose from its moorings in measurable space—and, indeed, made space itself a function of complexes of energy. Reality, in physics, was no longer a machine, but an equation, and only those who were able to acquire a sense of familiarity for abstruse mathematical formulas could be said to feel "at home" in the modern universe. Common mortals found it necessary to accept the new definitions of "reality" on faith, or remain suspended in a tenuous atmosphere of incomprehensible mathematical abstractions. The third shock was the explosion of the bomb over Hiroshima, which turned the "progress" of modern physics into a dread reality for the entire world. At a single blow, both the temper and the tempo of the world were changed. It was not a really "new" development, of course. Fission had been theoretically predicted for a number of years; the willingness to use any engine of destruction science and technology might invent had been present since long before the invention of gunpowder; but the impact of this sort of release of atomic energy on the popular mind and emotions has placed science in a role that was recognized previously only by prophets and dreamers. Modern physics has become like the genie the poor fisherman released from the bottle, and not even a whole corps of atomic scientists, organized into public-spirited groups, can get the genie to go back into his bottle. For the genie, after all, is but the personification of the motives and methods of our civilization, and the scientists but the hired technicians who have done our bidding.

Many years ago, writing in *The Secret Doctrine,* H. P. Blavatsky remarked that the scientists would be made to abandon their materialistic assumptions, "not by spiritual, theosophical, or any other physical or even mental phenomena, but simply by the enormous *gaps* and *chasms* that open daily and will still be opening before them, as one discovery follows the other, until they are finally knocked off their feet by the ninth wave of simple common sense." (I, 620.) It seems obvious that the scientists are far nearer this point than they were fifty years ago—how near, no one can say, although, as the

Introductory chapter of this work suggests, ". . . in the twentieth century of our era scholars will begin to recognize that the *Secret Doctrine* has neither been invented nor exaggerated, but, on the contrary, simply outlined; and finally, that its teachings simply antedate the Vedas." (I, xxxvii.)

Perhaps we can say that the present is a period of confusion and uncertainty which would quite obviously have to precede any such recognition. In any event, the *philosophical* prestige of science is rapidly waning. No longer is it possible for enthusiasts to repeat the hopes of the eighteenth-century *philosophes* for a world reformed, transformed and made perfect by the genius of scientific discovery. Pompous declarations on what "science" has revealed are no longer listened to with bated breath; in fact, the genuine scientists of our time have grown quite humble before the mysteries of nature—before the mysteries of *human* nature as well as those of the physical world.

In short, the past century's most frequently availed of sources of popular dogmatism have lost their magic. If a world set free from these commanding authorities is a sadly bewildered world, it is nevertheless a world set free, and this means that intelligent men in every country are finding themselves forced to rely on their own initiative and reflective powers in trying to meet the problems of their lives and times.

A significant aspect of the present-day psychic situation—and by "psychic" is meant the normal responsiveness of human beings to emotional stimuli, as contrasted with phenomenalistic psychism—is the tendency of the psychic environment to grow more rigid, while the psychic content of people's lives, the stuff of impressionability, becomes increasingly plastic as a result of the discrediting of familiar authorities. The rigidity is found in the increasing demands of political controls incident to war and the threat of more war. While it may appear that the wars of the twentieth century have *caused* these psychic tendencies, an alternative view is that the psychic tendencies have caused the wars, and that the regimentation of militarism and ideological fanaticism is the "easy way" men have chosen to fill the void left in their lives by the breakdown of more personal outlooks and attitudes. The "mass" character of modern psychological and social life, then, is but symptomatic of underlying changes in the

constitution or relationship of man's principles, in this particular cycle or sub-cycle of human evolution, and the sociologists and historians who make war responsible for the aimlessness of modern life have in some measure mistaken effect for cause.

There is always a price to pay for freedom. Those who understand what freedom is are willing to pay the price without reluctance, and able to pay it through their knowledge of the laws of nature. But for those to whom freedom has meant little more than the absence of some form of external restraint, the price is often too heavy to bear. History is full of instances of people who found freedom a precocious gift of the fates. Follies, excesses, and mad saturnalias almost always mark the sudden release of large numbers of human beings from past oppressions, whether political or psychological. The true price of freedom is always discipline, and unless the discipline is self-imposed, the freedom is no more accessible than some distant star.

These are some of the hazards of a cycle of freedom from old forms and conditionings. They mark the unavoidable risks of the future, and not only in the future, but in the present, for the cycle is upon us. *Light on the Path* speaks of an important transition in the life of the individual aspirant, and there is a limited sense in which this transition is directly analogous to a phase in the life of a race or civilization. "Not till the whole personality of the man is dissolved and melted"—says the author of this occult treatise—"not until it is held by the divine fragment which has created it, as a mere subject for grave experiment and experience—not until the whole nature has yielded and become subject unto its higher self, can the bloom open." In other words, accompanying every great change for the better in the life of human beings will be of necessity a great travail. It is this, perhaps, that we need to understand, more than anything else, while confronted by the depressing aspects of the world around us.

What is of far greater importance than the dangers and difficulties of the cycle is the common ground now emerging for theosophical explanation—the *rational* explanation of things. Despite the eddies and backwashes of the psychic cycle—despite the volcanic eruptions of war and the terrors of totalitarian politics—a new common ground is rising from the sea of receding dogma and tired denial. And as it

emerges, new areas of discussion are rapidly marked off and identified by men who are potentially the pioneers of new ways of thinking about man, his disabilities and his possibilities. Never has there been a time when so many of the prevailing orthodoxies were under attack on so many fronts. In medicine, agriculture, diet, education, social relationships, psychology, both academic and clinical, sociology, and anthropology, revolutionary rumblings are making themselves heard and felt. In each case, something of a "back to nature" theme is at the root of the movement—something of a drive to clear away the rubbish of preconception and to start afresh, without dogmas, upon a foundation of natural facts. And "natural facts," so far as these tendencies are concerned, has hope of something like impartial definition.

Interestingly enough, the workers in these fields of reform and transition seem to be about the only members of our society who are relatively unaffected by the dark spells of fear and anxiety. In this way, perhaps, cycles "overlap" without ever actually touching one another, save by superficial conjunction of outer periphery. It is always those who have found important work to do who are immune to the drag of the past. While the nominal leaders of our society are metaphorically wringing their hands and crying out, "What shall we do to be saved?"—these others, these few, are busy at the practical necessities of salvation. They are working to *change* the pattern of habitual human action at its roots in the basic relationships of day-to-day existence. And it is here, in these areas of common ground, free, or relatively free, from prejudice or preconception, that some of the sensitive growth-centers of the world may be found.

The Theosophical Movement is not best served, we know, by rushing out "to do, to do," nor is it of any value to attempt to interest "special people." The work of theosophists is with basic principles. But to work with basic principles is to apply them, and the scope of application for Theosophical principles is limited only by the framework of culture, the common intellectual and moral horizon, and the imaginative power of theosophists themselves. As the world rushes on to its destiny, new possibilities of application are always appearing. The common ground shared by theosophists and the world around them is not a static region with boundaries fixed by some changeless Kurukshetra of the past. The field of application, of

striving to understand and to communicate understanding, is a dynamic region of thought and feeling; it moves as the world moves, even if not always in the same direction. It is a *living* field, peopled by explorative ideas, meteors of hope, and intuitive shafts of speculation. Each day, minds struggling for synthesis are bringing new facts to the attention of their fellows. Their vocabulary may belong to their specialty, but their discoveries belong to mankind. In many departments of human inquiry, the work of the student of Theosophy lies in the direction of reinterpretation rather than contest and "refutation."

It may be difficult, in some instances, to see the fruit of seventy-six years of effort in behalf of the principles of the Wisdom Religion. But, unless the law of Karma and Cycles plays us false, the harvest must in some measure already exist. These have not been all of them years of mere preparation. It is time, perhaps, to recognize that the world *has* changed, and that the part of the Theosophical Movement in bringing about that change may be greater than we think. Such recognition would call for a new stance of confidence, founded upon a sense of achievement—not "our" achievement, but the achievement of that power of determination, of Manasic insight and foresight, which is the common property and privilege of all who feel within themselves, in any degree, the bond, the birthright, and the inspiration of the fellowship of souls.

MORAL PIONEERS

History has no time to be just. It is her business, as impartial chronicler, to record successes, but she rarely appraises their moral worth. . . . In truth, however, no effort made by the pure at heart should be deemed futile or stigmatized as barren; nor is any expenditure of moral energy dissipated into empty space to leave no repercussions. Though vanquished, those who lived before the time was ripe have found significance in the fulfilment of a timeless ideal; for an idea is quickened to life in the real world through the endeavours of those who conceived it where none could witness the conception, and were ready for its sake to advance along the road to dusty death.

—STEFAN ZWEIG

THOUGHTS ON "LIGHT ON THE PATH"

IT is more than reasonable to assume that each of us who studies Theosophy—and it is a lifelong study—has his favorite book on this all-absorbing philosophy, one which it is always a real delight to peruse at any time, but an absolute "must" to read for a while before retiring; a book, in short, which has stirred to the depths his innermost being and influenced the course of his life so profoundly that it has become part of himself. Many are drawn to daily study of the monumental, erudite *Secret Doctrine* with its wealth of information on cosmogony as well as the delineation, so painstakingly and tirelessly traced, of the source of all philosophies. Others are attracted to the beloved *Gita* with its immortal messages haunting the memory like a Beethoven melody, or the deeply moving *Voice of the Silence* with its soul-satisfying precepts. Still others find in *Light on the Path* the spiritual sustenance they crave. As with the physical, so with the spiritual; one is impelled to study such works as will satisfy the hunger for growth.

To read the printed words, with their beautiful eastern imagery, in *Light on the Path* can easily be done during the quiet of an evening, but to understand the esoteric meaning behind the words would take a lifetime of study; yet countless people have derived immeasurable spiritual comfort and guidance from perusing this little book. To try to elucidate the hidden meaning of the precepts this book carries is so gigantic a task that it would demand the illumination of an adept, yet comment may be attempted on one or another verse, such as the following:

> "Before the voice can speak in the presence of the Masters, it must have lost the power to wound."

To reach the stage of development when one can speak, and be heard, in the presence of the Masters—the Masters whose form we cannot perceive, yet whose presence we can feel—should be the goal of all true Theosophists; but before that spiritual state can be realized, many human frailties will of necessity have to be discarded; or, perhaps it would be more correct to say that many undesirable traits must dissolve under the ray of spiritual unfoldment. One of the

chief obstacles, unquestionably, is the failure to guard our utterances: the voice that vilifies, the carping, vindictive tongue, even the voice which does not speak in protest when the religious, political or moral reputation of one is being assailed or examined under the microscope of sitting-room or smoking-room conversation. How often have we sat in silence, and so become an accessory with all the karmic consequences such a role entails, when the character of a person is being subtly smeared? It is quite conceivable, is it not, in the devious workings of the Law of Karma that the "smearer" may find himself one day the "smeared," with no hope of vindication.

In these days of shifting worldly values, when more than ever the evanescence of material possessions as compared with the durability of things spiritual, is being made cameo clear, many promising and prominent careers are being cruelly shattered by the nefarious practice of smearing, even by people professing lofty altruistic motives. Regrettable as it is, it is nonetheless true there is a tendency, markedly widespread in its scope, to calumniate in the press, on the platform, or in general conversation, all those whose religious beliefs are anathema to us, or whose political leanings do not coincide with ours, or whose moral conduct, usually from hearsay evidence, we do not approve. In the majority of such character assassinations, not only is the career of one so smeared irretrievably ruined, but the good potential of that person temporarily paralyzed at a time when all edifying forces are urgently needed to leaven the mass of ignorance, shallow thinking and inertia.

While it is always disconcerting, to say the least, to hear religious or political views diametrically opposed to ours being expounded, as seekers after the truth we should nevertheless endeavor to penetrate with calm reasonableness to the bedrock of such views to determine whether or not they stem from a spiritual foundation, and so try by dint of our theosophical studies to set the expounder on the right path. To hear another point of view presented from a different angle occasionally opens a new and inspiring channel of thought and may strengthen the ideas we hold on a subject, apart from which, by giving courteous and attentive consideration to what is being expressed, we may learn something of value from the dissertation.

It seems hardly necessary to add that the practice of listening to gossip which clouds the character of one trying to live according to

his lights should not only be eschewed, but vigorously condemned by all sincere Theosophists. By what special dispensation have we, any of us, the authority to sit in judgment on any person, regardless of race, color or creed, whose frailties are being whispered in our presence? The time to raise the voice in protest is when there is irrefutable proof that the expounder is systematically working to undermine the common good, or dim the light of those who are trying, however feebly, to preserve the spiritual truths bequeathed to us by our revered Founders.

If we yearn to be able to speak—and be heard—in the presence of the Masters, we should never align ourselves with those who seek by means fair or foul to destroy or distort the good influence of those who, like us, are trying to draw near to the effulgence of the only true Light that can be shed upon the Path.

Universal Aspirations

Universal aspirations, especially when impeded and suppressed in their free manifestation, die out but to return with tenfold power. They are cyclic, like every other natural phenomenon, whether mental or cosmic, universal or national. Dam a river in one place, and the water will work its way into another, and break out through it like a torrent.

One of such universal aspirations, the strongest perhaps in man's nature, is the longing to seek for the unknown; an ineradicable desire to penetrate below the surface of things, a thirst for the knowledge of that which is hidden from others. Nine children out of ten will break their toys to see what there is inside. It is an innate feeling and is Protean in form. It rises from the ridiculous (or perhaps rather from the reprehensible) to the sublime, for it is limited to indiscreet inquisitiveness, prying into neighbours' secrets, in the uneducated, and it expands in the cultured into that love for knowledge which ends in leading them to the summits of science, and fills the Academies and the Royal Institutions with learned men.

—H. P. Blavatsky

THE INCARNATION OF MANAS

"WE are ceaselessly self-deceived." Could we but repeat this bit of ancient wisdom often enough to ourselves, many abysses of delusion might be avoided. For we go from one set of delusions to another as we pass through various states of consciousness, unconsciously. Where to look for the seat of this deception is the problem. We are surrounded by it as by a thick fog, only occasionally raising our heads above the cloud of human selfishness for long enough to glimpse the light of the true, to grasp momentarily that which might be ours continuously. *The Voice of the Silence* says, "The Mind is the great Slayer of the Real. Let the Disciple slay the Slayer." If the mind is the seat of the deception, then an understanding of the cause of all problems, ultimately, lies in our ability to grasp the meaning of the incarnation of Manas in its dual capacity.

The theosophical teaching on the dual nature of Manas—the thinking principle—shows that there is that portion of Manas which identifies itself with the phenomenal universe, both visible and invisible, called Ahankara, or the lower mind. The other, or higher mind, extracts results and values from the experiences of the phenomenal world while identifying itself with none. In this aspect, the mind has been named Paramarthasatya, the *self-analyzing* principle. The knowledge of how to incarnate fully into the phenomenal world, to be in the world, but not of it, to see ourselves in all things without losing our perspective—this is the master key in human evolution, the fulfillment of our spiritual beinghood. But right understanding and soul integrity are not "bestowed" upon us. They must be forged within ourselves, in the fires of trial and error, from which we extract the essence of experience, while attaining to detachment from self-interest, and at the same time to a *spiritual* identification with all.

"The Manas (mind) is the knot of the heart," says Mr. Judge. And what is the knot of the heart but the self-identifying attachment of Manas to the phenomenal world—to an object, a sensation, an attitude, a person, or a point of view? The power of attachment ties knots in the heart, so that its channels become engorged with frus-

trations, with disappointments, with delusions, while we continue to experience the karma of thinking that *we* are any of these things or that any thing or person is the true.

A great subtlety shows itself here, for, as taught in the *Gita,* we cannot have experience in the world without involving ourselves in the nature of the world. But becoming involved in the world does not mean to wallow in it, to become absorbed in it, to become changed by it. It means, rather, illuminating with the light of wisdom every experience and circumstance, and thus, by howsoever little, raising the whole of manifested nature up to a higher level—a higher life. This every being can do, from the humblest aspirant to the Adept whose wisdom illumines the whole world.

Many people think that "becoming involved" means some kind of "contamination." They go through purification rites in their minds by soaring high above such involvement, saving their energies, as they think, for "higher" things. They resolutely proceed on what they consider to be the royal high road of knowledge and purity, meditating on high themes, reminding themselves of what they represent in the world in contrast to other selves. They have their minds all made up as to the true path of evolution. They know without question what the "theosophical point of view" is on every subject. The statements of H.P.B. and Judge are made into "rules," and those who do not "see" similarly are held to be misguided and perhaps even dangerous to the welfare of the Movement. As for those "outside" the theosophical work, they are merely tolerated, or endured. Having evolved this little universe out of the fabric of their own particular notions, they "involve" themselves in it, never dreaming that *they* could be ceaselessly self-deceived.

The hearts and minds of men cannot be awakened by any such representations of self-delusion, but only by the light of soul-knowledge proceeding from the incarnated Manas, which is expressed in terms of *understanding* the needs of others. This understanding rejects no one, ignores no experience, sees deep occult significance in every event. It is an understanding which does not identify itself with any particular method or point of view, but recognizes that there is something to be learned in all experiences and from all methods. Do we not all learn *something* from the experiences of others as well as from our own?

The philosophy of Theosophy presents itself to the earnest mind with such overwhelming force and conviction that it is at times difficult not to feel like one of nature's favorite children—one of the "saved." With a feeling of great nobility and consecration, we affirm that we are the upholders of Universal brotherhood, volunteers in the service of humanity. Why, then, are we so often haunted by intimations that somewhere something is missing? It is good to feel noble and consecrated. But what *is* the service of humanity? How about those with whom we live and love and work and experience? Too often we envelop ourselves in a cocoon of spiritual martyrdom and look upon those others as our karmic trials and tribulations. We are so self-deceived that we forget that the knots are in our own hearts—not necessarily alone in the hearts of others.

By our rigidity of thinking we miss golden opportunities to be of real service—the opportunity to give an upward impulse to every circumstance as we meet it in company, not so much by what we do outwardly, but by inward attitude. The secret behind this upward impulse lies in the ability of every theosophist to enter into every experience with a whole heart, ever keeping in view the possibility of a wider and deeper meaning, a more significant fruition, whatever the external conditions may be. As Robert Crosbie has said, "It is not *what* we go through that counts, but what we get out of it." In other words, the significance of any experience does not lie in its external form, but rather in *where our minds are,* and what they are doing. Thus, the theosophist does not become identified or immersed in any experience, or experiences, but uses them as bases from which finer and more valuable meanings may be derived.

Each being acts from the basis of what he conceives to be the highest. Perhaps that highest is love of wife or children, devotion to an ideal, of doing one's job well, or labors for the community. It is in the context of our everyday experience that the significant truths of life are discovered. Bearing this in mind, and maintaining his capacity to evaluate, the theosophist makes it possible for others to expand their conceptions of the highest. So those relationships between husband and wife, between child and parent, between teacher and pupil, between neighbors and acquaintances, need never be mediocre, need never be distorted or one-sided. The true theosophist shuns no part of life, nor does he cooperate grudgingly with the

inevitable. He is not lukewarm in the performance of his duties to and with others, but tries to make life seem rich and truly significant to them. At the same time he is never content to let experience remain on any one level.

The nature of Manas is to move toward meaning; this *is* true "incarnation." Thus the establishment of rapport between human beings on this plane *can* lead to understanding and rapport on higher planes of being. May this not be regarded as a phase of "raising the lower by the higher"? As long as our attitude toward others is that of repugnance, of resentment, of hard and fast conclusions, we are not living as manasic beings, no matter what the experience or situation, but rather, are experiencing at the psychic level where understanding eludes us. Did not the Buddha say that the greater beareth with the lesser love that it may raise it unto easier heights? Discrimination, humility, knowledge, and a real regard for others are the necessities of true education. There is need to guard against losing sight of our divine origin and purpose, since even from the basis of our own faults and failings may be generated the compassion which expresses itself in terms of understanding the *causes* of the faults and failings in others. Knowledge *is* understanding, or Manas fully incarnated. There is no light, no love in all the regions of the Universe to surpass it.

Philosophical Independence

No one method is to be insisted on. Each man is a potency in himself, and only by working on the lines which suggest themselves to him can he bring to bear the forces that are his. We should deny no man and interfere with none; for our duty is to discover what we ourselves can do without criticizing the actions of another. The laws of karmic action have much to do with this. We interfere for a time with good results to come when we attempt to judge according to our own standards the methods of work which a fellow member proposes for himself. Therefore if any member proposes to spread the doctrines of theosophy in a way that seems wise to him, wish him success even if his method be one that would not commend itself to you for your own guidance. —William Q. Judge

A YEAR OF THEOSOPHY

[“A Year of Theosophy” first appeared in the *Theosophist* for January, 1881, marking the beginning of its second year of publication. Students will note that H.P.B. is here less concerned with a summary of specific accomplishments during 1880 than with reiteration of the basic intent of the editors. “A Year of Theosophy” must have been selected for inclusion in *A Modern Panarion*—discussed last month in an editor’s note on “A Society Without a Dogma”—for the reason that it became increasingly clear to the devoted students of H.P.B. that a continual repetition of her attitudes and methods was necessary. Though in some respects the article might appear to be a “casual” editorial piece, present readers will perhaps be particularly struck by two things: first, H.P.B.’s rejection of any claim to superior moral excellence, without pretense of practicing “asceticism” at that juncture; and second, the wise prophecy in respect to the regeneration of India, with which the article concludes.—Eds., THEOSOPHY.]

THE dial of time marks off another of the world’s hours. . . . And as the old year passes into eternity, like a rain-drop falling into the ocean, its vacant place on the calendar is occupied by a successor which, if one may credit the ancient prophetic warnings of Mother Shipton and other seers, is to bring woe and disaster to some portions of the world. Let it go with its joys and triumphs, its badness and bitterness, if it but leave behind for our instruction the memory of our experience and the lesson of our mistakes. Wise is he who lets “the dead past bury its dead,” and turns with courage to meet the fresher duties of the New Year; only the weak and foolish bemoan the irrevocable. It will be well to take a brief retrospect of those incidents of the year 1880 (A.D.) which possess an interest for members of the Theosophical Society. The more so since, in consequence of the absence from Bombay of the President and Corresponding Secretary, the anniversary of the Society was not publicly celebrated.

It will not be necessary to enter minutely into those details of administration which, however important in themselves as links, weak or strong, in the general chain of progress, and however they may have taxed the patience, nerves, or other resources of the chief

officers, do not at all interest the public. It is not so much explanation as *results* that are demanded, and these in our case abound. Even our worst enemy would be forced to admit, were he to look closely into our transactions, that the Society is immeasurably stronger morally, numerically, and as regards a capacity for future usefulness, than it was a year ago. Its name has become most widely known; its fellowship has been enriched by the accession of some very distinguished men; it has planted new branch societies in India, Ceylon and elsewhere; applications are now pending for the organization of still other branches, in California, India, Australia and elsewhere; its Magazine has successfully entered the second volume; its local issues with the government of India have been finally and creditably settled; a mischievous attempt by a handful of malcontents at Bombay to disrupt it has miserably failed.* It has made official alliances with the Sanskrit Samaj of Benares, that is to say, with the most distinguished body of orthodox Sanskrit pandits in the world, with the other Sabha of which Pandit Rama Misra Shastri is manager, and with the Hindu Sabha, of Cochin State; while, at the same time, strengthening its fraternal relations with the Arya Samajes of the Punjab and North-Western Provinces. Besides all this, we can point with joy and pride to the results of the late mission to Ceylon, where, within the space of fifty-seven days, seven branch societies of Buddhist laymen, one Ecclesiastical Council of Buddhist priests, and one scientific society were organized, and some hundreds of new fellows were added to our list.

All this work could not be accomplished without great labour, mental anxiety and physical discomfort. If to this be added the burden of a correspondence with many different countries, and the time required for making two journeys to Northern India and one to Ceylon, our friends at a distance will see that whatever other blame may properly attach to the founders, who have never claimed infallibility of any sort, that of laziness is assuredly not to be cast in their teeth. Nor, when they learn that the work done since leaving America, the travelling expenses and the fitting and maintenance of the Headquarters' establishment have cost some Rs. 20,000, while the

*Secret letters by former members denouncing its founders, sent to Parisian and other Theosophists, and pretending that the Bombay Society was virtually extinct (its *best* members having resigned), were sent back to us with new protestations of friendship and loyalty and expressions of scorn for the conspirators.—(Ed. *Theos.*)

cash receipts of the treasurer (exclusive of those from Ceylon, Rs. 2,440, which sum is set aside as a special fund to be used in the interests of Buddhism) have been only *one thousand two hundred and forty rupees,* all told, including one donation of Rs. 200 from the universally respected Maharani Svarnamayi, and another of Rs. 20 from a well-wisher in Bengal, will those who direct the Society's affairs be regarded by them as making money out of their offices? And these figures, which may most readily be verified, are our only answer to the calumnies which have maliciously been circulated by some who did not and others who *did* know the truth.

The trip to Ceylon occupied twenty-seven days in all, the second one to Northern India 125 days. Thus the founders have been absent from Bombay on duty twenty-nine weeks out of the fifty-two; their travels extending through twenty-five degrees of latitude, from Lahore at the extreme north of India to Matara, the southernmost point of ancient Lanka. Each of the Indian Presidencies has contributed a quota of new members; and at the former capital of the late lion-hearted Runjeet Singh, a branch was recently organized by Sikhs and Punjabis under the title of the "Punjab Theosophical Society." During the twelvemonth, President Olcott delivered seventy-nine lectures and addresses, a majority of which were interpreted in the Hindi, Urdu, Guzerati and Singhalese languages.

Many misconceptions prevail as to the nature and objects of the Theosophical Society. Some—Sir Richard Temple in the number—fancy it is a religious sect; many believe it is composed of atheists; a third part are convinced that its sole object is the study of occult science and the initiation of green hands into the Sacred Mysteries. If we have had one we certainly have had a hundred intimations from strangers that they were ready to join at once if they could be sure that they would shortly be endowed with Siddhis, or the power to work occult phenomena. The beginning of a new year is a suitable time to make one more attempt—we wish it could be the last—to set these errors right. So, then, let us again say: (1) The Theosophical Society teaches no new religion, aims to destroy no old one, promulgates no creed of its own, follows no religious leader, and distinctly and emphatically *is not a sect* nor ever was one. It admits worthy people of any religion to membership on condition of mutual tolerance and mutual help to discover truth. The founders have never

consented to be taken as religious leaders, they repudiate any such idea, and they have not taken and will not take disciples. (2) The Society is not composed of atheists, nor is it any more conducted in the interest of atheism than in that of deism or polytheism. It has members of almost every religion, and is on equally friendly terms with each and all. (3) Not a majority, nor even a respectable minority numerically speaking, of its fellows are students of occult science or ever expect to become adepts. All who care for the information have been told what sacrifices are necessary in order to gain the higher knowledge, and few are in a position to make one tenth of them. He who joins our Society gains no Siddhis by that act, nor is there any certainty that he will even see any phenomena, let alone meet with an adept. Some have enjoyed both these opportunities, and so the possibility of the phenomena and the existence of Siddhis do not rest upon our unverified assertions. Those who have seen things have perhaps been allowed to do so on account of some personal merit detected by those who showed them the Siddhis, or for other reasons known to themselves and over which we have no control.

For thousands of years these things have, whether rightly or wrongly, been guarded as sacred mysteries, and Asiatics at least need not be reminded that often even after months or years of the most faithful and assiduous personal service, the disciples of a Yogi have not been shown "miracles" or endowed with powers. What folly, therefore, to imagine that by entering any society one might make a short cut to adeptship! The weary traveller along a strange road is grateful even to find a guide-post that shows him his way to his place and destination. Our Society, if it does naught else, performs this kindly office for the searcher after truth. And it is much.

Before closing, one word must be said in correction of an unfortunate impression that has got abroad. Because our pamphlet of rules mentions a relationship between our Society and certain proficients in Occult Science, or "Mahatmas," many persons fancy that these great men are personally engaged in the practical direction of its affairs; and that in such a case, being primarily responsible for the several mistakes that have occurred in the admission of unworthy members and in other matters, they can neither be so wise, so prudent, nor so far-seeing as is claimed for them. It is also imagined that the President and Corresponding Secretary (especially the latter) are, if

not actually Yogis and Mahatmas themselves, at least persons of ascetic habits, who assume superior moral excellence. Neither of these suppositions is correct, and both are positively absurd. The administration of the Society is, unless in exceptionally important crises, left to the recognized officials, and they are wholly responsible for all the errors that are made. Many may doubtless have been made, and our management may be very faulty, but the wonder is that no more have occurred, if the multiplicity of duties necessarily imposed upon the two chief officers and the world-wide range of activity be taken into account. Colonel Olcott and Madame Blavatsky do not pretend to asceticism, nor would it be possible for them to practise it while in the thick of the struggle to win a permanent foothold for the Society in the face of every possible obstacle that a selfish, sensuality-loving world puts in the way. What either of them has heretofore been, or either or both may in the future become, is quite a different affair. At present they only claim to be trying honestly and earnestly, so far as their natural infirmities of character permit, to enforce by example and precept the ideas which are embodied in the purposes and rules of the Theosophical Society. Once or twice ill-wishers have publicly taunted us with not having given practical proofs of our alleged affection for India. Our final vindication must be left to posterity, which always renders that justice that the present too often denies. But even now—if we may judge by the tone of our correspondence, as well as by the enthusiasm which has everywhere greeted us in the course of our journeyings—a palpably good effect has been produced by our appeals to the educated Indian public. The moral regeneration of India and the revival of her ancient spiritual glories *must be exclusively the work of her own sons.* All we can do is to apply the match to the train, to fan the smoldering embers into a genial warmth, and this we are trying to do. One step in the right direction, it will doubtless be conceded, is the alliance effected with the Benares pandits.

THE PATH OF ACTION

THE Mohammedan teacher directs his disciples to tread carefully the razor's edge between the good and the bad; only a hair line divides the false from the true. In this the Asiatic took an excellent illustration, for the "hair line" is the small stroke *alif,* which, placed in a word, may alter the sense from the true to the false.

In chapter four of *The Bhagavad-Gita,* entitled, "Jnana-Yog," or the book of the Religion of Knowledge, the blessed Krishna instructs Arjuna upon the nature of action, saying: "Renunciation of and devotion through works, are both means of final emancipation; but of these two, devotion through works is more highly esteemed (by Him) than the renunciation of them"; and, "the nature of action, of forbidden action, and of inaction must be well learned. The Path of Action is obscure and difficult to discern."

In ordinary humdrum life these words of Krishna are true enough, but their force is strangely felt in the mind of the devoted student of Theosophy, and especially if he happens to be a member of the Theosophical Society.

That body of investigators has now passed its probationary period, so that, as a whole, it is an accepted chela of the Blessed Masters who gave the impulse that brought it into being. Every member of it, therefore, stands to the whole Society as every fibre in the body of any single chela does to the whole man. Thus now, more than ever before, does each member of the Society feel disturbing influences; and the Path of Action becomes more and more likely to be obscured.

Always existing or coming into existence in our ranks, have been centers of emotional disturbance. Those who expect that these perturbations ought now to cease and grow less likely to recur, will find themselves mistaken. The increase of interest that is being taken in the Society's work, and the larger number of earnest students who are with us than at any previous period, constitute elements of agitation. Each new member is another nature added, and every one acts after his own nature. Thus the chances for being discomposed are

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NOTE.—This article was first published by Mr. Judge in the *Path* for November, 1887.

sure to increase; and it is better thus, for peace with stagnation partakes of the nature of what is called in *The Bhagavad-Gita, Tamagunam,* or, of the quality of darkness. This quality of darkness, than which there is nothing worse, is the chief component of indifference, and indifference leads only to extinction.

Still another element in this equation that every earnest Theosophist has to solve, and which in itself contains the potency of manifold commotions, is a law, hard to define, yet inexorable in its action. For its clearer comprehension we may say that it is shown in nature by the rising of the sun. In the night when the moon's rays flooded the scene, every object was covered with a romantic light, and when that luminary went down, it left everything in a partial obscurity wherein many doubtful characters could conceal their identity or even masquerade for that which they were not. But on the sun's arising all objects stand out in their true colors: the rugged bark of the oak has lost the softening cover of partial day; the rank weeds can no longer be imagined as the malwa flowers. The powerful hand of the God of day has unveiled the character of all.

It must not be supposed that a record has been kept by any officials, from which are to be taken and published the characters of our members. There is no need of that; circumstances taking place in natural order, or apparently from eccentric motion, will cause us all, whether we will or not, to stand forth for what we are.

Every one of us will have to stop and learn in the cave outside of the Hall of Learning before we can enter there. Very true that cave, with all its dark shadows and agitating influences, is an illusion, but it is one that very few fail to create, for hard indeed to be overcome are the illusions of matter. In that shall we discover the nature of action and inaction; there we will come to admit that although the quality of action partakes of the nature of badness, yet it is nearer to the quality of truth than is that which we have called darkness, quietude, indifference. Out of the turmoil and the strife of an apparently untamed life may arise one who is a warrior for Truth. A thousand errors of judgment made by an earnest student, who, with a pure and high motive, strives to push on the Cause, are better than the outward goodness of those who are judges of their fellows. All these errors made in a good cause, while sowing good seed, will be atoned by the motive.

We must not then be judges of any man. We cannot assume to say who shall or shall not be allowed to enter and to work in the Theosophical Society. The Masters who founded it wish us to offer its influence and its light to all, regardless of what we may ourselves think; we are to sow the seed, and when it falls on stony ground no blame attaches to the sower.

Nor is our Society for good and respectable people only. Now, as much as when Jesus of Nazareth spoke, is it true that there is more joy in heaven over one sinner who repenteth, than over ninety-nine just men who need no repentance.

Remembering then that the Path of Action is obscure and difficult to be discerned, let us beware of the illusions of matter.

HADJI ERINN

CHARACTERISTICS OF HEROISM

The characteristic of a genuine heroism is its persistency. All men have wandering impulses, fits and starts of generosity. But when you have resolved to be great, abide by yourself, and do not weakly try to reconcile yourself with the world. The heroic cannot be the common, nor the common the heroic. Yet we have the weakness to expect the sympathy of people in those actions whose excellence is that they outrun sympathy and appeal to a tardy justice. If you would serve your brother, because it is fit for you to serve him, do not take back your words when you find that prudent people do not commend you. Be true to your own act, and congratulate yourself if you have done something strange and extravagant, and broken the monotony of a decorous age. It was a high counsel that I once heard given to a young person, "Always do what you are afraid to do." A simple manly character need never make an apology, but should regard its past action with the calmness of Phocion, when he admitted that the event of the battle was happy, yet did not regret his dissuasion from the battle.

—*Emerson's Essays*

YOUTH-COMPANIONS ASK— AND ANSWER

SHOULD we look for difficult situations in which to place ourselves, in an attempt to stir up our Karma for more rapid learning?

Taking hold of oneself, consciously and willingly putting oneself into difficult situations, can be a step in soul evolution. By deliberately taking a step which part of our nature says is too difficult and insecure, we have to call on the strength of our higher nature. A will to abandon peace and security of the senses as the supreme goal leads toward regarding man as an eternal pilgrim who goes *through* experiences.

In examining history we find that all progress, whether in religion, science, or philosophy, was made by men who deliberately gave up a "normal," secure life for one of uncertainty and hardships. We instinctively admire such men. We admire their courage and their embodiment of the conviction that there is something more to life than merely existing.

There is a point which shouldn't be overlooked when considering whether or not to "look for difficult situations in which to place ourselves." The actual "putting" into situations is done by the attitude of the individual. If he wishes to be more observant, bring out hidden prejudices in himself more quickly than just "letting things happen," he must be sure he is not getting involved in the experience for the experience's sake. A man who finds himself choosing a difficult situation rather than an easy one may at times find complications of Karma snowing him under. But since we are always responsible to the whole universe under law, we must not forget to do things thoughtfully—slowly and thoroughly.

When we find ourselves in situations which demand a great deal of thought and self-examination, we discover many undesirable as well as desirable tendencies in ourselves which we never before knew existed. Often such a self-examination may change the course of a life. The more the creative mind is kept active and reaching for further awareness, the closer it comes to a fully self-conscious evolution. The strong tendency to be lazy and let things come as they will

predominates too much. Such action—or inaction—is that of the lesser beings of consciousness. Since we are beings of choice and will, we should take our lives into our hands and quit the easy path for the one which demands the best of ourselves.

What did Mr. Crosbie mean when he said we should work to transform personalities into living souls? Does this mean that the personality hinders soul development?

What is a "living soul"? If you were to ask ten people for their conception of a living soul, it would be like asking them to tell you the best way to live—and you would probably receive ten very different answers. Perhaps even more than with other ideas, a conception of what the soul is must grow and deepen with the years. For these two words, "living" and "soul," are words of force which, when thus written together, stimulate thought and imagination.

A "living soul" must be alive and intelligent in all parts of his nature. He must, for instance, strive to be rational at all times, and would endeavor to choose as wisely as possible to gain a clear and unprejudiced conception of all the issues involved in any situation. But besides the purely rational in man which must be cultivated, there is another plant which can only grow quietly and delicately. It is "the sense of the fitness of things." It is that sense which enables us to look at a situation as a whole, and to feel instinctively what actions of our own will be in harmony both with the needs of the situation and with our highest desires. The continuous, intuitive perception of true relationships can only come about, perhaps, when the whole individual, in all his parts, is informed with "the intelligence from above"—the Higher Self. For when the being is "aligned," from top to bottom, he is open for this light to shine through.

The ever-present desire of soul to become more than it is, to grow in balance and understanding, is obviously interrupted and obscured by the vagaries of the particular body, psychic nature, and mind which make up the personality it uses. We may despair at times at its heedlessness and its irrationalities, and it may well seem to be a hindrance to the soul's development. First and foremost, however, the individual personality is a place of action. It was Arjuna's battleground, and is our own. It is there that unworthy thoughts and deeds must be reduced to ashes; there we can change our natures as

we will. We are checked by the Karma by which we have formed the character of our instruments, but we have made our excellences as well as our shortcomings.

Should there be provisions made for religion in our public school system, for the individual students who would want this?

A study of the many different denominations of religion would certainly seem worthwhile, especially for a group of students bent on learning the truth that lies within religion in its entirety. Probably the most important realizations in this study would be, first, that there are many religions which are either equal or even greater in number of believers than the Christian religion, and second, that a venture in this direction by our educational system would have to be completely unbiased.

This is apt to be far from the case in our public schools. The emphasis seems to be placed more on the gaining of numbers in the Christian religion than on the benefits from a course of impartial religious study. If we are to start with the hypothesis that there should be some kind of cooperation with religion, as assumed by the Board of Education in Los Angeles—"Schools must work with home, church, and places of employment"—it would seem unfair to the student to have only the Christian religion represented. While our public school system does not seem the place for religious *activities,* a place for *education in religion* could possibly be fitted into our secondary schools on a voluntary basis. But such a course, obviously, should not be prejudiced towards any particular religion.

Another important factor entering this question would be the effects of group pressure on individuals of different denominations. Some would think this would be especially true in our primary schools, while others would fear the danger more in high school. Group exclusion can cause the beginnings of inferiority complexes.

The writer has observed that "religion in the schools" can generate emotionalism, as for example, through self-confessions in "How I found God" auditorium sessions. Since the public schools are supported by the state, we would definitely mix church and state by allowing religious institutions to enter our schools. This may be the aim of different religions, but is not the aim of people truly concerned with education in harmony with the Constitution.

In the book, THE UNINVITED, *a well-known novel of psychic experience by Dorothy Macardle, a "spirit" at a séance keeps inventing untruths. Can a "spirit" actually do this, since I understand that the astral shell, or kama-rupa, can only repeat, and not create?*

Messages from the "spirits" come through a medium—a person, that is, whose passive nature makes him sensitive to the vibrations from the "spirit world." Actually, it is *not* the spiritual nature of the deceased person which is contacted, but rather the combined astral body and passions and desires which, in life, were associated with the physical body. In combination, after death, these principles are called the *kama-rupa,* and although it is devoid of mind or conscience, it does retain memory and a kind of reflected consciousness. The whole atmosphere of the séance is one of bewilderment, passivity, indiscrimination. The sitters are easily fooled, and the medium himself unknowingly blends his astral body with the *kama-rupa.* It is because of this blending of the matter of the living and the dead that there is sometimes produced a visible shape.

Unfortunately for the séance, the absence of the deceased person's higher and nobler qualities leaves a bundle of undesirable elements in the *kama-rupa,* which, with nothing to control it, can play havoc with the medium and sitters. In certain respects, then, the *kama-rupa* can *seem* to "create" formulations of thought. And, while it must always be kept in mind that the condition of the people seeking contact makes them gullible and apt to color their observations with their own imaginings, there are also those evil "spirits" which enter the séance room with the desire to inflict their evil on others. They are the shells of debased people who, during life, steeped their lives in matter and physical lusts, with no regard for their higher nature. Their consequent after-death states lead them through a slow, half-conscious, disintegration, and since it is a prolonged process, the "spirit" has much more time to inflict its diabolical influences on the living. Perhaps such a *kama-rupa* attended the séance in the story in question, desiring to mislead and confuse the medium and sitters.

NOTES ON THE KEY

ONE of the most useful psychological correlations suggested by H.P.B.'s brief discussions of the educational objectives of the Theosophical Society is that between what she terms "the natural selfishness of human nature" and "bigotry in every form, religious, scientific, or social, and *cant* above all."

In one sense, it is clear that the central thesis of Theosophical teaching, as H.P.B. herself presents it, is that the human being is *not* "naturally selfish." But the Higher Soul of man, able to raise itself through its own inherent "divine" inspiration to presently unimaginable heights of power and knowledge, is apparently something other than "human nature."

"Human nature" obviously refers to the idiosyncracies and vagaries of the purely personal self, and the term has acquired the meaning she assigns to it through common usage. When we say, "Well, it's simply human nature," we obviously are referring to the most typical sort of everyday weaknesses. But what are these weaknesses? Are they actually *inherent,* as is often so casually assumed? "Weaknesses" are but the habit patterns of undisciplined natures. They become "typical" when the level of thought in contemporary society encourages their retention, when once inaugurated by the individual. Cant and hypocrisy, the vices H.P.B. castigates the most strongly, are, so to speak, the societal "freezing points" for a great many forms of pride and self-seeking. Each disciple, according to *The Voice of the Silence,* must battle the demon of pride, but if one lives in a society wherein the highest places are open to those who force their way into prominence through pride, there will be no effort to transcend the *habit* of prideful self-regard, when once it has been acquired—and all, it must be thought, exist at some time or other in this state of "self-gratulation."

The pattern of society, from this point of view, does not determine the nature of the individual, but it does act toward establishing a common denominator of apathy and ignorance. All of this should be so obvious as to scarcely need mentioning, since psychologists and sociologists speak often of "moral man and immoral society." The

same view reaches the public at large in supplementary form through those perennial plot-forms for novels which depict the relatively excellent personal virtues of some man whose small "Achilles' heel" is struck fatally by societal arrows, and who "falls" because he has no encouragement for retaining other and higher impulses than those dominating in his environment.

This is the drama of Triumphing Environment—and the drama of the man who is less than a hero, only because he is unable to retain his nobler ideals, while from a Theosophical point of view attention needs always to be drawn to those others of true heroic stature who do *not* succumb. H.P.B.'s castigations of society indicate her sympathy for the plight of every modern man. None can become a hero overnight, and when psychological materialism makes the task of moral improvement so difficult, the karma of retrogression is by no means that of the single person who fails to live the life of a Buddha.

Strangely enough, from conventional viewpoints, but logically enough from the viewpoint of Theosophy, conventionalism in any of its forms is a perfect introduction to totalitarian political systems. For both the totalitarian forms of government and conventionalisms are obviously premised upon the deification of environment. The belief that men can be *re*made in the proper image by a controlled environment, to the extent that they will easily and habitually conform at all times and in all ways, is the same belief which inspires those who wish to control, or even simply condemn, social "deviation" in a presently existing society.

The last paragraph of "The Objects of the Society" (p. 40, orig. edition) points out the manner in which conventional religion has served to betray its adherents by preoccupation with the weaknesses of man when unaided by God and the Church:

> This selfishness, instead of being eradicated, is daily strengthened and stimulated into a ferocious and irresistible feeling by the present religious education, which tends not only to encourage, but positively to justify it. People's ideas about right and wrong have been entirely perverted. . . . The precepts of practical selfishness taught in the Mosaic Bible, against which Christ so vainly preached, have become ingrained into the innermost life of the Western nations.

H.P.B. then continues with the assertion that "Theosophy alone can eliminate the perversity of this trend." She adds:

> What we have to do is to seek to obtain *knowledge* of all the laws of nature; and to diffuse it. To encourage the study of those laws least understood by modern people, the so-called Occult Sciences, *based on the true knowledge of nature,* instead of, as at present, on *superstitious beliefs based on blind faith and authority.*

It is not difficult to see the bearing of the above on the matter of whether or not Theosophists, who strive to practice the greatest tolerance, should generate a sort of fraternal warmth for the teachings of all creeds and sects. It appears that H.P.B. is saying that sympathy and tolerance are possible only when the sectarian message is *affirmative,* morally and spiritually. It is *not* possible for the Theosophist to be tolerant of *in*tolerance, if he wishes to alter the conditions which encourage man's worst habits of thought and feeling to flourish in socially supported sanctity. To be tolerant to hypocrisy, to cant, to destructive intent, prideful ambition or dishonesty is not only an unprincipled acquiescence to the wrongs perpetrated by them —it is also a casting of one's lot with all that is *tamasic* in world society. H.P.B. further writes that:

> Our duty is to keep alive in man his spiritual intuitions. To oppose and counteract—after due investigation and proof of its irrational nature—bigotry in every form, religious, scientific, or social, and *cant* above all, whether as religious sectarianism or as belief in miracles or anything supernatural.

Now we come to another equally important subtle distinction. In discussing the relationship between the catholicity of the study policy of the society and the fact that Fellows in the Society are enjoined by rule to never "force their personal opinions on another Fellow," she quotes further from one of the rules of the T.S.:

> No officer of the Society, in his capacity as an officer, has the right to preach his own sectarian views and beliefs to members assembled, except when the meeting consists of his co-religionists.

The same rule, however, also states that:

> All have an equal right to have the essential features of their religious belief laid before the tribunal of an impartial world.

It would appear that the intent of this rule, expressing so well H. P. Blavatsky's own attitude, was to discourage members from condemnation of the "essential features" of any "religious belief." Their own "personal views" were similarly protected, but they must

not be *forced* on others. Now, when we contemplate the matter, a "forcing" of personal opinions and beliefs seems always to involve condemnation of contrasting beliefs. There is literally no other way to "force" than to brusquely or angrily brush aside as irrelevant the reservations, questions, doubts, or opposing thoughts raised by another. The spirit of the Society's platform was to encourage an intelligent *synthesis* of beliefs and opinions, while the establishment of any routinized disapprobations was discouraged.

Here we see, perhaps, the extent to which both H.P.B. and the original Society were concerned with what is now called "methodology." If we turn from these considerations to a study of the bulk of H. P. Blavatsky's published works, it is easy to come to the conclusion that she was nearly as much concerned with methods of study as with the specific content of study. Her opposition to all forms of religious bigotry was an opposition based, not primarily upon the differences in teaching between theological assertions and the doctrines of Theosophy, but upon the falseness of the methods used to inculcate and preserve those assertions. We may perhaps conclude, then, that any Theosophical "Fellow," regardless of the title of the organization to which he belongs, is entitled to respectful consideration for any views expressed, *so long as these are in no way denunciatory of others' affirmations.* To denounce "denunciation," however, is not to inveigh against an idea or ideal, but only against the belligerence or unkindness which accompanies its expression.

Turning back to the consideration of the "natural selfishness of human nature" and, conversely, considering the *natural divinity* of man's higher nature, we may establish a further correlation. It must be precisely by the breaking of the molds of men's minds that the higher aspirations and intuitions are encouraged to lead us further on the quest for impartial knowledge. Since the pilgrimage of the soul involves the expression of the Kshatriya qualities, there are many times of necessary battle wherein all the strength and vehemence of one's nature can be utilized. But justifiable battles are always battles against those who are waging destructive warfare, or, more accurately, against pernicious *methods* of warfare, which have to be named for what they are.

It would seem that unless these subtleties are grasped in their entirety, Theosophists will find it impossible to advance the Theo-

sophic cause, even though it would be entirely possible to "champion" Theosophical doctrines by the condemnation of beliefs antithetical to them. The inheritors of H.P.B.'s Theosophical Movement of the last century seem to have been often oblivious of the truly occult significance of H.P.B.'s methods. The content of Theosophical teaching was preserved by various Societies, but since deeply ingrained psychic forces of religious habitude continually asserted themselves, the breadth of the Theosophical perspective remained for but a few to see. The "moral" to be derived for our present cycle of the Twentieth Century should be clear.

THEOSOPHICAL "TOLERANCE"

H.P.B. always said—following the rules laid down by high teachers—that no proposal for theosophical work should be rejected or opposed provided the proposer has the sincere motive of doing good to the movement and to his fellows. Of course that does not mean that distinctly bad or pernicious purposes are to be forwarded. Seldom, however, does a sincere theosophist propose such bad acts. But they often desire to begin some small work for the Society, and are frequently opposed by those who think the juncture unfavorable or the thing itself unwise. These objections always have at bottom the assumption that there is only one certain method to be followed. One man objects to the fact that a Branch holds open public meetings, another that it does not. Others think the Branch should be distinctly metaphysical, still more that it should be entirely ethical. Sometimes when a member who has not much capacity proposes an insignificant work in his own way, his fellows think it ought not to be done. But the true way is to bid good-speed to every sincere attempt to spread theosophy, even if you cannot agree with the method. As it is not your proposal, you are not concerned at all in the matter. You praise the desire to benefit; nature takes care of results.

—WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

GIVE UP THY LIFE

GIVE up thy life, if thou would'st live," says *The Voice of the Silence,* and then in explanation adds: "Give up the life of physical *personality,* if you would live in spirit." Of all sacrifices this is the greatest, the most difficult, and the simplest. The simplest, because it can be accomplished in an instant of earnest, willing aspiration and absolute self-abnegation, provided these qualities are sustained. The most difficult, because it necessitates surrendering all that the personal man cherishes and calls "living." If there is anything an individual dreads relinquishing—friends, ideas, advancement on the Path, spare time and recreation, sundry forms of self-indulgence, intellectual study, self-praise and satisfaction, the high opinion of others—to that degree does he live in matter, is, in effect, at odds with himself.

One form of bondage especially prevalent in the Western world —and Theosophists, being children of their age, are not exempt from the failing—is enslavement to the reading habit, to "eye knowledge," or, as phrased by Mr. Judge, to "much reading, little thought." Anyone can test himself to what extent he is master in his own mental house. Can he enjoy an hour in his own company, with no external task or reading material before him? The average man will either fall asleep or suffer acute boredom and restlessness, giving the lower mind carte blanche to fly aimlessly from one memory or sense image to another.

The difference between a Sage and an ordinary mortal has been highlighted thus: to one ephemeral outer impression the Sage takes cognizance of, he receives and dwells upon a thousand from the Soul within. To a thousand impressions from without, to which the ordinary man is receptive, attention is paid to one from within. Who is happier and more a human being—the man who incessantly pores over the words of others, or he who thinks deeply and expansively on the sure foundation of the eternal verities innate in all? This does not mean that the real Theosophist discards all books; he simply reads less and thinks and practices more. "A few books well read, well analyzed, and thoroughly digested are better than many books

read over once," advises Mr. Judge. Just as the food we eat in a few minutes' time requires hours to digest and assimilate, even more so must this be the fact with all-potent mental food. Further, as exercise is essential to bodily assimilation, the mind, too, must put its newly-acquired learning into practice or risk mental indigestion. Madame Blavatsky indicates that a high aspiration not acted upon turns to poison in the nature, just as pure mountain water, denied an outlet, becomes a stagnant pond.

In an individual's mental life, too, he has to surrender the personal to find the eternal. For what shall a theosophist think about? He could be intellectually self-reliant yet be tied fast to the personality. These choices confront him: Shall he follow a line of thought especially attractive to himself, or bow to another's mental needs who asks his help? Shall he give preferred attention to study class preparation, where many minds can benefit by mutual sharing of ideas, or shall his own private study have first consideration? Shall problems concerning the maintenance and expansion of the lines of work of the eternal Theosophical Movement be uppermost in his mind, or shall he channel his efforts in individual activities which foster self-interest?

Here is what H.P.B. advises: "No working member should set too great value on his personal progress or proficiency in Theosophic studies; but must be prepared rather to do as much altruistic work as lies in his power."

To paraphrase the *Voice:* Give up thy life of intellectuality if thou would'st live in the realm of Universal Wisdom and Compassion. The man who neglects family duties to think out conundrums, who is indifferent to his neighbor's woes whilst he soars in the sphere of abstractions, has simply transferred his center of gravity from fleshly desires, which he imagines he has overcome, to the seductive lures of the selfish lower mind. The truly noble minded occupy their thoughts with formulating ways and means of drawing the developing intelligence of the race to consider the great truths concerning the destiny of the soul. It is their constant joy to repeat and repeat the Theosophical ABC's, and to demonstrate in their own lives the light Theosophy casts on every trial of daily living. They study always, but only to be the better able to put principles into action.

THOUGHTS ON "PEACE"

IN these days of intense distrust and searing suspicion, of almost daily tensions and incidents, with the major nations taking the spotlight in the arena of power politics, it is understandable that people of all degrees of intelligence are fearful that the dove of peace will never again dwell amongst us. To add to the steadily mounting feeling of apprehension, our radio commentators and news analysts leave no room for doubt that a sharp cleavage exists between the two predominant ideologies, a breach that is ever widening, with dim hope, so it is asserted, of a peaceful solution. On all sides we are bombarded with panaceas and potions for the cure of a sick planet. Some advocate the creation of fighting forces equipped with lethal weapons of unsurpassed destructiveness, others plead for the establishment of a world government with wider powers than those accorded the United Nations, as being the only hope of safeguarding the peace. Others point to the advantages to be derived from cooperative processes as individuals, nations and hemispheres, the "have" nations contributing generously of their wealth, technical skill and knowledge for the uplifting of the backward nations, probably a step in the right direction if by any remote possibility the majority of individuals and nations in their present stage of collective development would be in accord with, and willing to work wholeheartedly for, the attainment of so idealistic a plan.

As sincere Theosophists we cannot ignore these tensions and incidents, much as we would like to, for they obtrude into almost every conversation and mar in more or less degree the free and spontaneous interchange of ideas in our daily contacts, nor can we offer any immediate palliative to mitigate the uneasiness pervading all classes of society. We fully understand the cause underlying the present social unrest, so widespread in its scope. We are aware that karma is in full and active operation on an international level, and that what we have sown collectively as nations, over a period of time, we are now in the process of reaping. This planet, consequently, is in what might be termed karmic evolutionary gestation and the resultant birth will be influenced for weal or woe by the spiritual essence generated by each individual. A reflection upon this will bring us to

the realization, as emphasized in many theosophical works, that we, as individuals first, and then as nations, are the purveyors of our happiness or misery—a truism we sometimes overlook when evaluating mundane happenings.

What, then, can we as individuals do to ensure a natural evolutionary birth after the period of gestation? Obviously, it behooves us to focus with all the strength at our command our thoughts and actions toward the eradication of such forces as mitigate against the common harmony. Since a nation is the aggregate of its individuals, it should be abundantly clear that, if we ardently desire peace, we have, as individuals first, and then as nations, to tread the hard road of sacrifice to reach the summit of planetary spiritual evolution. We must be prepared to relinquish many dubious practices which time and habit have elevated into the accepted: the insensate pursuit of pleasure, the worship of the golden calf, the abandonment of our cherished and pet theories concerning the treatment of so-called inferior races, the callous indifference displayed in many quarters to the plight of the "submerged tenth"—to mention but a few—a complete reversal, in short, of our way of thinking which, in turn, will influence our way of life, and lead us to an understanding and acceptance of the Eternal Verities.

Is the price we must pay to ensure peace too high? By no means, when we realize what would accrue to us by following the dicta of our higher selves. No longer would it be necessary to maintain armies of frightfulness, and to sacrifice the flower of our youth in offensive or defensive warfare, since in the ascending arc of spiritual evolution, conflicts between individuals as well as between nations would be impossible.

If we could only divest our thoughts of the fallacious reasoning that "history repeats itself," and that since there have always been wars, permanent peace is unattainable; if we could lead bewildered humanity to the realization of the inexorability of the great Law of Karma, we should be better equipped mentally and spiritually to be in the vanguard of those called upon to lead the race toward an evolutionary spiritual birth. Granted the road would be long and arduous, but at the same time the joy of service to suffering humanity would be both sweet and lasting.

ON THE LOOKOUT

Monkeys are Peculiar

According to a "noted zoologist" from Bedford College, England, who recently lectured at the University of California at Los Angeles, scientists have now proved that "monkeys can reason." (Los Angeles *Times,* Nov. 4.) The zoologist, Dr. H. Munro Fox, summarized the results of a considerable amount of "IQ" experimentation with different species of mammals and fowls as indicating that there is a distinct difference in the *nature* of intelligence between the simians and all other creatures. While dogs, he concedes, are unquestionably very intelligent, the dog is incapable of summing up the total meaning of a problem-situation and making a decision. Rather, the dog will follow the hit-or-miss, trial and error method in solving food-getting puzzles.

A Kind of Reflection?

Even worms are able to learn by trial and error, it has been demonstrated. But the monkeys are different, it appears, and the following L.A. *Times* report of one experiment indicates what appears to be a *qualitative* distinction between the "IQ" of simians and canines:

> A string of bananas was hung from the ceiling of a room occupied by a monkey. The room contained two small boxes and an empty cracker tin.
>
> Unable to reach the bananas, the simian sat for some minutes staring, first at the bananas and then at the boxes. Then, as though he had the problem solved, the monkey quickly piled the boxes together, put the cracker tin on top, and climbing this ladder, snatched the fruit.
>
> Dogs are intelligent, but can they actually reason like this monkey?
>
> While a dog might find a hole in a fence accidentally by much running back and forth, a reasoning monkey might hop away from the fence, look at it, and find the hole consciously with his eyes.

Instinct and Intelligence

While Dr. Fox raises other points which are extremely interesting in respect to the group-consciousness aspect of ordinary animal intelligence, and corroborates some of the implications of *Secret Doctrine*

teaching, the Theosophist may find special claims for the intelligence of monkeys a useful point of departure for review of the complications attending man's relationship to the apes. "The impassable abyss of mentality and self-consciousness," as H.P.B. describes the normal separation between man and animal, was apparently crossed, in some degree, so far as the apes and the nature of their "mentality" were concerned, by the mating of third race astral "men" with purely animal types. H.P.B. writes:

> And if this is found clashing with that other statement which shows the animal later than man, then the reader is asked to bear in mind that the *placental mammal* only is meant. In those days there were animals of which zoology does not even dream in our own; *and the modes of reproduction were not identical* with the notions which modern physiology has upon the subject. It is not altogether convenient to touch upon such questions in public, but there is *no* contradiction or impossibility in this whatever.

FURTHER SEPARATION THROUGH EVOLUTION

Though such combining of psychic intelligence has been impossible throughout the period of historically known evolution, the earliest days in the formation of species, she says, allowed such cross-breeding. Since, though the animal "differs from man in external shape, but by no means in the materials of its physical fabric, and is informed by the same, though undeveloped monad. . . ." the final dredging of the gulf between *physical* man, and the higher animals was an *evolutionary* development, flowing from the uses made of the more refined prototypal human forms after the final incarnation of self-conscious souls from previous periods of evolution. (See *S.D.* II, 81.)

TWO KINDS OF APES

In further outlining the esoteric teachings on biological evolution, H.P.B. indicates why the very word "ape," when used in the meaning of "imitate," is suggestive. The apes at least, and perhaps also the monkeys, retain some of the special psychic propensities which should or might have been entirely reserved for the human kingdom. This secondary stock, in turn, once more became psychically "humanized" by a further mating in Atlantean times:

The Occult doctrine has never taught, or any Adept believed in, the preposterous modern theory of the descent of man from a common ancestor with the ape—an anthropoid of the actual animal kind, unless metaphorically. To this day the world is more full of "ape-like men" than the woods are of "men-like apes." The ape is sacred in India because its origin is well known to the Initiates, though concealed under a thick veil of allegory.

The ancestors of the Atlanteans—were ape-like, intellectually senseless giants. Morally irresponsible, it was these third Race "men" who, through promiscuous connection with animal species lower than themselves, created that missing link which became later (in the tertiary period only) the remote ancestor of the real ape as we find it now in the pithecoid family.

Anthropoids Comparative Newcomers

The bestiality of the primeval mindless races resulted in the production of huge man-like monsters—the offspring of human and animal parents. As time rolled on, and the still semi-astral forms consolidated into the physical, the descendants of these creatures were modified by external conditions, until the breed, dwindling in size, culminated in the lower apes of the Miocene period. With these the later Atlanteans renewed the sin of the "Mindless"—this time with full responsibility. The resultants of their crime were the species of apes now known as Anthropoid.

The Common Ancestor Theory

"Lookout" has from time to time reported the views of biologists and anthropologists who have questioned the ape-like "common ancestor" theory of orthodox Darwinism. Frederic Wood Jones, Professor of Comparative Anatomy in England's Royal College of Surgeons, for example, has been an outspoken revolutionary, insisting that all evidence points more directly towards a descent *from* man than an *ascent* from the monkey in explanation of the anthropoid. Orthodox opinion among anthropologists has, with a few such exceptions, always emphasized the common ancestor idea in such a way as to leave little distinction between direct "descent from apes" and from this other hypothetical common-ancestor source, yet these scientists have usually also been conscientious about making the distinction. A practical result has been that investigations prompted by search for evidence bearing on the "common ancestor" have finally led to revisions of the oversimplified postulates of the earlier Darwin-

ists. To indicate this advance, and that even a small qualification in respect to such a crucial matter is better than none, we may recall a scientific commentator's remark a few years ago to the effect that only the fundamentalist religious followers any longer believe that anthropologists believe that man is descended from an anthropoid ape. (Waldemar Kaempffert in the New York *Times* for Sept. 3, 1939.)

A Church Baptizes the Ape

As if to bear out this generalization, both Theosophists and anthropologists may be excused for being considerably amused at the remarks, last year, of a Church of England bishop. The bishop, Dr. E. W. Barnes, told a diocesan conference that the Church might as well give up a losing struggle with "Science" and begin to teach that "man was not a special creation, but has been developed from the ape":

> "If we wish to win the confidence of our young people we must tell them the new-found truths of the origin of man and of human civilization.
>
> "The time has come for another religious reformation in which the claims of Christian orthodoxy shall be changed by incorporating the new scientific discoveries of the last 100 years.
>
> "Have we yet," the bishop asked, "as Christians, taught in day schools or Sunday schools that the world was created, not in 4004 B.C.—the Roman Catholics give a slightly later figure—but millions of years ago, and that man was not a special creation but has been developed from the ape?"

Giving Too Much Ground?

This is indeed a case in point toward proving that minds accustomed to dogmas and blind faith always insulate themselves effectively against both the spirit and the fruits of investigation, and are apt to end knowing little of what is going on in the world. Here, too, we might have the psychological explanation of why so many, when once they break away from adherence to religious dogma, are left with a completely unsophisticated, hence more absolute, materialism. Dr. Barnes, in surrendering to the onslaught of science, surrendered far more than many anthropologists would wish. Had this churchman, and others like him, been reviewing the developments in anthro-

pological science, he would find with each passing year *more* reason for arguing, *on scientific grounds,* the primitive or original differences between man and ape. The following two contentions are examples of informative material *from the pen of an anthropologist* that Dr. Barnes might have been studying:

> The first is that, considered solely from the point of view of structure, Man is an extremely primitive type, and the second that, though more primitive in basal structure than the living monkeys and apes, Man has his own remarkable structural specialisations that distinguish him from all other mammals and appear to be very ancient hallmarks. . . .
>
> It would be better to discard all the drawings that depict the early progenitors of Man as slouching brutes carrying themselves in postures incompatible with the dictates of gravity, and to relegate to oblivion all the speculations and theories concerning the gradual rise of Man from a quadrupedal pronograde to a bipedal orthograde posture. (Frederic Wood Jones, *Hallmarks of Mankind.*)

Criss-Cross

The cases of Dr. Jones and Dr. Barnes indicate, in this graphic comparison, the nature of two contrary transitions which have been taking place concurrently during the past hundred years. In many fields of science there has been an advance, even if for years almost imperceptible, toward revision of original crudities of theory, with the existence of a true "soul" within man becoming ever more tenable as a possible hypothesis. The way of the Divines, on the contrary, has often been to put up a stiff, uncompromising fight, only to later retire from debates on man's genesis altogether, either by such unnecessary admissions as those of Dr. Barnes, or by confining religious teaching to preachments on the Virtues of Cooperative Ethics.

"The New Way to Better Hearing"

This book, by Victor L. Browd, M.D. (Crown, New York), should prove a boon and a delight to Theosophists who are firmly convinced that every man should be his own physician, especially if he starts early enough in life with the idea of normality in living—right diet, regular sleep, regular exercise, fresh air and water, together with disciplined mind and senses. As is commonly known, the hearing is first of the senses to deteriorate, but, for one so overtaken—in

case his hearing perhaps becomes dulled or "spotty" at the age of fifty—Dr. Browd brings the assurance that good hearing can be restored and fear of future deafness eliminated. The system of re-education for better hearing through definite exercises, carefully planned for *all* types of hearing impairment, requires patience and persistency, but the reward, according to Dr. Browd, will come soon enough to show that this natural means is effective.

NATURAL PHYSICAL DISCIPLINES

The New Way to Better Hearing is not the first book of this revolutionary character. The first pioneer, W. H. Bates, M.D., published in New York City, in 1920, *Perfect Sight without Glasses*—a book that has afforded the means of preserving, improving and even restoring sight to many thousands. Of the Bates method, it may be said that "a very little of this practice delivereth a man from great risk," and that what can be done for improving the eyes by diligent practice is well-nigh incredible. Apparently, if one can see at all, he can see *better.* That, long since the death of Dr. Bates, his work goes on with no revision, but simplified in application, is of itself the strongest recommendation of "the natural method."

SUPPLEMENTS ALL METHODS

Dr. Browd's book applies the same sort of knowledge and understanding and common sense to problems pertaining to the Ear, as that manifested by Dr. Bates in respect to the Eye, and it is attested that he gets the best results, likewise, with persons whose hearing cannot be improved by any other method. Dr. Browd does not claim to be the first discoverer of "re-education methods," nor does he decry the aid given by the fenestration operation, by the artificial ear-drum, or the hearing aid, but he supplements the work of all these and establishes a better hearing level for patients in these categories, as well as for those cases of slight hearing impairment. Dr. Browd realizes that it is better to start the treatments under competent guidance, but, later, intelligent people are encouraged to perfect the use of exercises applying to their own case, with a minimum of assistance, putting an end to long hours of travel to the doctor's office and additional waiting.

Professional Respect

Let no one imagine that these "self-help" systems are proposed by mere theorists and tyros. Dr. Bates was at the top of his profession as opthalmologist, and Dr. Browd is eminent as otologist; he has elicited the cooperation of many distinguished ear specialists who are genuinely interested in enabling men, women, and children to have perfect hearing, if possible, and bettered hearing, at least.

The New Way to Better Hearing is practically arranged. First is shown how the human hearing machine works, this being illustrated by excellent colored charts, so that the patient himself can *understand* poor hearing. Next, Dr. Browd helps each one to diagnose his own case by filling out his own disability questionnaire. He also gives attention to those who feel that they cannot relinquish hearing aids, although experiencing great difficulty with them. The rest of the book is devoted to instructions for the patient, and for the assistant. The case histories in the book vouch for the fact that one who is really in earnest and will faithfully carry through *can not fail* to receive splendid benefit—which helps the patient to acquire courage and the self-confidence to try. After that, his own success can lead him on. Dr. Browd demonstrates, too, that the effect of bettered hearing on self-confidence cannot be over-estimated.

Physical Occultism

When it is considered that 7,000,000 people in the United States have severe hearing impairment, and that in Dr. Browd's book is suggested a corrective treatment—inexpensive, which can be accomplished at home, in a few minutes of the day—we must recognize a beneficence which does not exist in "wonder drugs," often lauded to the skies today but gone tomorrow. That such natural and humane methods may see even wider application in the future is a bright hope, for it means a safe and sane step toward developing the sovereign faculty of the Will of man.

Inverted Psycho-Therapy

Prof. Milton Wexler's report of research into "The Structural Problem in Schizophrenia" (November, 1951 *Bulletin of the Menninger Clinic*), suggests an unusual method of treatment for this disorder. Nedda, a 38-year-old schizophrenic, with "weird dress,

Self-Reliance and Sanity

This appears to be a sad but accurate commentary on the inadequacy of religion to meet basic needs, while at the same time it bears out Krishna's admonition to Arjuna that he "should not unsettle those whose discrimination is weak and knowledge incomplete." Thus we can agree with Dr. Wexler's appraisal of this "religious method" as serving at best only temporarily as a "valuable means of establishing communication with the patient," and join him further in the hope of "the therapist behaving in such a way as to make it possible for the patient to build *within herself* a clear and steady image of another kind of person." From the theosophical viewpoint this would mean helping the individual, sane or insane, to realize and identify himself with the *Real, the Divine Ego.*

While Dr. Wexler's schizophrenic patient could be reached only on the common ground of rigid moral sanctions, and the doctor was willing to work on that common ground, still there is a question, here, of ethics which remains to be determined. How far should a doctor go in "pretending" to agree with a patient, for therapeutic purposes? We can imagine cases in which this would amount to little more than a compromise of principle, for the sake of gaining a specious and temporary calm. The doctor's motive, of course, and his theory of "normal" moral sense are all-important, here. Perhaps it is best simply to raise the question, rather than to attempt to make any rules concerning such subtleties.

Health Laws and Comic Books

Dr. Frederic Wertham, a psychiatrist with a social conscience, recently told a New York legislative committee that most of the eighty million comic books sold monthly in the United States are "the cause of a psychological mutilation of children." Dr. Wertham has been waging war on the content of comic strips for a good many years. As an eminent representative of his profession—he is a psychiatrist at Queens General Hospital—he has focussed a considerable amount of interest and concern on the subject. Dr. Wertham has now recommended that the sale of crime comics, in especial, should be prohibited to children under fifteen years of age. Some of Dr. Wertham's supporters have, according to the New York *Times* (Dec. 4, 1951), decided on a program of definite action:

> Two witnesses urged the setting up of a licensing agency in the State Education Department and the strengthening of the penal law, and a third asked for the outright banning of crime and sex comics "if it can be done within the Constitution."

Appeal to Self-Discipline

One assemblyman, in supporting the proposal for legislative prohibition, emphasized the failure of attempts to persuade publishers to revise their policies:

> He said that when the committee was set up two years ago, the members had hoped that the industry, if given a chance, would police itself and make state regulation unnecessary.
>
> We have extended to the industry more than reasonable opportunity to correct the abuses," the chairman said. "Nothing has been accomplished of a constructive nature toward industry-wide effective self-regulation, except that proposals for further delay have been advanced. Further delay in recommending legislation would constitute failure to fulfill our obligation.

Censorship, Pro and Con

This problem is not only difficult to settle at the legislative level; it is also one of the most frustrating philosophical and moral problems, being in principle one to which Plato addressed himself at length in the *Republic*. Plato's thesis, in effect, was that those whose wisdom has fitted them to be governors of a State are obliged to protect the unwise from corrupting themselves with improper literature. Whether Plato used this device to forcibly remind the supersophisticated populace of Greece that there is such a thing as corrupt literature, or whether he was simply arguing for a "moral" dictatorship may be difficult to determine, although the status of Initiate accorded Plato by H. P. Blavatsky would weigh against the latter interpretation. But we do know that the pros and cons of Prohibition have always been, and will continue to be, subjects for vigorous debate, since the necessity for safeguarding free expression and the obligation to oppose the spread of corrupting influences are *both* Theosophical "duties."

Dangers Apparent to All

It is now universally agreed that the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution failed to secure moral improvement by prohibiting

manufacture and sale of alcoholic beverages, but it will also be universally agreed by sociologists and psychologists that the comic strip is a threat to the emotional balance, if not the sanity, of children. If the present trend towards the dramatization of crime sensationalism and perversion is to be halted in the near future, it unquestionably will require legislative action, for the comics publishers have too much wealth and power to be easily discouraged by "moral" influence. But, from a Theosophical point of view, it is also easy to see why legislative prohibition is dangerous in principle.

LEGISLATION AND THOUGHT CONTROL

"Censorship" and legal restrictions are, we hardly need be reminded, the tools used for enforcing "moral" opinions by Catholic officialdom, and the banning of the *Nation* from New York public school libraries is an illustration of how avid Catholics are to put such machinery into action. Thus, while any Theosophist may sympathize deeply with Dr. Wertham and his associates, we have to also consider whether prohibitory steps in respect to comic reading material will aid in a conditioning process which makes religiously inspired *thought* control acceptable. Also, when we arrive at the question of thought control, we must consider the relatedness of another menace—political loyalty oaths. Unfortunately, it is easier for many Americans to accept loyalty oaths than it would be for them to support legislation against insidious comic strips. Both issues revolve around the difficulties of equating a belief in "freedom" with the belief that legislation should reflect a concern for social responsibility. It does seem, though, that it would be far better to prohibit the sale of such comics as those described by Dr. Wertham than to allow the continuance of the Loyalty Oath practice, for the latter is truly a method of "thought control," whereas prohibiting injurious comics rather belongs in the category of health laws.

THE UNITED LODGE OF THEOSOPHISTS

DECLARATION

The policy of this Lodge is independent devotion to the cause of Theosophy, without professing attachment to any Theosophical organization. It is loyal to the great Founders of the Theosophical Movement, but does not concern itself with dissensions or differences of individual opinion.

The work it has on hand and the end it keeps in view are too absorbing and too lofty to leave it the time or inclination to take part in side issues. That work and that end is the dissemination of the Fundamental Principles of the philosophy of Theosophy, and the exemplification in practice of those principles, through a truer realization of the SELF; a profounder conviction of Universal Brotherhood.

It holds that the unassailable basis for union among Theosophists, wherever and however situated, is "similarity of aim, purpose and teaching," and therefore has neither Constitution, By-Laws nor Officers, the sole bond between its Associates being that basis. And it aims to disseminate this idea among Theosophists in the furtherance of Unity.

It regards as Theosophists all who are engaged in the true service of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, condition or organization, and

It welcomes to its association all those who are in accord with its declared purposes and who desire to fit themselves, by study and otherwise, to be the better able to help and teach others.

"The true Theosophist belongs to no cult or sect; yet belongs to each and all."

Being in sympathy with the purposes of this Lodge, as set forth in its "Declaration," I hereby record my desire to be enrolled as an Associate, it being understood that such association calls for no obligation on my part, other than that which I, myself, determine.

The foregoing is the form signed by Associates of the United Lodge of Theosophists. Inquiries are invited from all persons to whom this Movement may appeal. Cards for signatures will be sent upon request, and every possible assistance furnished Associates in their studies and in efforts to form local Lodges. There are no fees of any kind, and no formalities to be complied with. Write to:

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